(c) the steps taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b).

No formal export target had been set for 1994-95. However, trade and industry had been exhorted to achieve export growth of 25 per cent during 1994-95. Exports during April-February 1994-95 the latest period for which aggregate trade statistics are available, have registered an increase of 17.3 per cent in US Dollars terms over the corresponding period last year. As per provisional estimates, monthly export growth rates in US terms during April-February 1994-95, over the corresponding months of 1993-94 are as given below :

Months	%Increase
April	12.6
May	6.7
June	9.4
July	6.0
August	24.6
September	24.0
October	26.9
November	18.8
December	29.0
January	12.0
February	15 6

(c) Export promotion is a continuous process and steps are taken to boost exports in consultation with trade, industry and other relevant interests Government has taken a number of steps to make the environment policies and procedures more export-friendly. The measures include grant of Income Tax exemption on export profiles, access to cheaper export credit designated in convertible currency and assistance to Export Promotion Counncils/Commodity Boards for export market development.

Trade relations with Asian countries

*296. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to establish increased trade relations with other Asian countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Government is keen to establish and strengthen trade relations with other countries in the Asian region. Government has adopted a strategy to expand trade and economic relations with the Central Asian Republics by signing bilateral framework Agreements, setting up of Joint Commissions/Committees, etc. and ascertaining the possibility of sending goods into Central Asian Republics *via* Iran.

In order to strengthen and increase trade relations between seven South Asian Countries, the Agreement establishing the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) was signed on 11th April, 1993 at the 7th SAARC Summit held in Dhaka. Besides, India has also entered into a Border Trade Agreement with Myanmar to give a boost to the bilateral trade between the two countries. The Indo-Myanmar border trade has been formally launched of 12-4-1995.

Census of beedi workers in the country

*297. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Labour does not have upto date data on beedi workers as 1991 census figures are still waited.